



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
REGION 10  
1200 Sixth Avenue  
Seattle, Washington 98101

May 23, 1997

Reply To  
Attn Of: ECO-088

Mr. Phil Janik, Regional Forester  
U.S. Forest Service, Alaska Region  
Federal Building, 5th Floor  
P.O. Box 21628  
Juneau, AK 99802

Dear Mr. Janik:

Congratulations for your recent decision to approve the Tongass Land Management Plan (TLMP) revision. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) appreciates the opportunity to participate on the TLMP team. In previous letters and conversations, EPA has endorsed the TLMP process, including the extensive public involvement, the intensive interagency consultation and collaboration, and the use of the best available science. Today, I want to reaffirm the integrity of the TLMP process, and commend you and the Forest Supervisors for the substantial environmental protection and habitat conservation called for under the new Tongass plan.

We strongly believe that the interagency approach that you have fostered has resulted in a better decisionmaking process, and thus, a better decision. Likewise, we think that including independent scientists on the TLMP team has resulted in a well-informed decision based on sound, credible science. In hindsight, it is difficult to imagine that a plan of this scope could have been developed using the old, adversarial way of doing the public's business.

EPA also endorses the substance of the selected alternative, especially the habitat conservation strategy. This is not to say that implementation of the new plan will not have any environmental effects; rather, we believe that the TLMP team has thoroughly analyzed, disclosed, and considered the significant impacts. Furthermore, the selected alternative includes many specific measures to avoid or mitigate some of the most significant impacts.

In closing, it is fair to say that you and the Forest Supervisors have addressed EPA's major concerns about the draft preferred alternative. Any remaining concerns can be addressed during project implementation or through an interagency monitoring team. We look forward to continuing to work with you and your staff in the implementation and monitoring of the new Tongass plan. Thank you once again for the opportunity to help shape the future of the Tongass National Forest.

Sincerely,

Chuck Clarke  
Regional Administrator

# Summary Paragraph Form

ERP Number F-AFS-L65137-AK

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Name of EPA Official Responsible For Review Of Project (Principal Reviewer)

Bill Ryan

Summary

EPA provided no formal written comments. EPA has no objection to the preferred alternative as described in the EIS.

Approved For Publication

(Initials of OFA  
Approving Official)

Note: Transmit 2 copies to MIU